



**MINUTES OF THE FOREST RESEARCH NATIONAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2006 BY VIDEO CONFERENCE**

<b>Present:</b>	Joan Webber	Chair, Prospect
	Lorraine Adams	Prospect
	Steve Osborne	PCS
	Mike Perks	Prospect
	Glenn Brearley	Prospect
<b>Minute Secretary:</b>	Ian Tubby	Prospect

1. Staff Council Chair has still not been confirmed. Robert Matthews has volunteered subject to line management approval if this is not possible then Sue Benham is prepared to step in. LA to try to organise a date for an Alice Holt staff meeting for as soon as possible and for a Joint Staff Council meeting after that in the new year.

2. Sue Gillingwater is in the process of updating the list of accredited Union Health and Safety representatives. Steve Osborne collated this during the meeting, and confirmed that only members who have received specific union based training are recognised as accredited therefore names put forward were Lorraine Adams for Prospect and Andrew Brunt for T&G, Andy has just taken up the position and will need to ascertain training before next year to remain accredited. No PCS reps were put forward for this list, as Mike Young has not received union training. It was determined that the training received recently was not recognised as it was not union approved.

3. Steve Osborne reported back on the situation regarding the non-payment of a members MSc course. The FJP was found and it was confirmed that the MSc had been supported by and signed off by her line manager. Steve had also spoken to the PCS reps at Silvan House and if further difficulties arise then they were happy to take this to the full time education officer for action. Steve has emailed a copy of the FJP to Ken Charles today and is awaiting as response. If Ken Charles has not responded by tomorrow then Steve will contact Ken Charles directly due to the urgency of the financial situation whilst our member is funding this MSc.

4. Joan Webber questioned Lorraine regarding a conversation had with Ken Charles regarding the appointment of Mark Oram (replacement of Rory Cobb) as a union representative on the Health and safety committee. It was decided that Lorraine should write to Ken Charles reminding him that being a union health and safety representative was purely Mark's choice and that it could only be made part of his job if he were in agreement to take on this union role, or that he would then be a representative of management.

5. Joan Webber read the contents of 2 proposed emails, the first regarding the position and role of the FR NOC and Staff council to give members more clarity regarding the roles at work within the Joint Unions. The second was a follow up regarding the continued impasse reached during the Promotion revision procedure, asking staff for feedback now that a round of promotions interviews had been held after the new procedures were implemented. From members views it will be decided whether to continue to negotiate.

6. Questions have been asked by members as to how the Change Manger is being paid for. Some members have been told that budgets are to be cut next year by 8% and then if divisions are expected to fund the Change Manger out of division budgets then this equates to further budget cuts from FR/FC funding. It is hoped that this money is coming from the CE's knowledge transfer fund or the innovation Fund. Questions were also asked as to how the Change manager was appointed, if this wasn't an advertised post then was he employed as a contractor or a consultant.

It was agreed that a letter would be written to Jim Lynch asking where the money is coming from to fund the change manager, whose decision it was to employ someone to facilitate the implementation of the Research Strategy and what the Terms of reference are for the appointment.

#### **7. Any other Urgent Business**

Discussions were held regarding the QA procedures and these were progressing. John Leslie carried out an audit and members of the QA committee were to go back to their divisions and complete interim audits.

It is thought to be appropriate now that the change manager has been employed to request a time frame for implementation of the Research Strategy. It was decided that the letter to Jim would be sent first before raising this, with will be revisited at the meeting.

Questions were raised about the role of the Country Liaison officers and how Neil Bowering fits in with their roles. It was also questioned how the CLO's know what the scientists are doing and what they are capable of when they are out liasing on our behalf. No conclusion was reached during this discussion.

#### **8. Next meeting**

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007 at 1.30pm